For dealings with Davenport

95 Adventist leaders said to be on carpet

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About 95 officials of the Seventh-day Adventist Church may be disciplined for improper or imprudent dealings with Southern California developer Donald J. Davenport, who filed for bankruptcy in 1981 owing the church $21 million in unpaid loans and interest.

An official of the General Conference, the church's top ruling body, said four officials are being recommended for termination. The official, who asked not to be identified, also said another 15 could be publicly reprimanded and demoted.

The names of the officials have been withheld during a period set aside to allow any internal appeal.

Meanwhile, world church leader Neal C. Wilson, in a statement released Tuesday, confirmed the church is considering a range of disciplinary measures — including dismissal — against 95 or so officials accused of ignoring church guidelines in making personal or church loans to the surgeon and post-office builder.

Wilson said those measures could range from a "private letter of administrative disapproval" to termination from church employment and loss of ministerial credentials.

"This is by far the most sweeping discipline ever attempted within the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Wilson said in the statement.

The written statement, released by a spokesman for the General Conference, coincided with publication of an article by Wilson on the "Davenport Affair" in the weekly Adventist Review.

It did not name names or even state the exact number of officials involved.

But it was Wilson's most detailed acknowledgement to date that Davenport's financial dealings extended far into the Adventist hierarchy.

An investigation by The Sun last year found that many of Davenport's transactions with Adventist organizations and officials appeared to violate the church's own investment and conflict-of-interest guidelines.

It found that some Adventist investment officers made personal loans to Davenport at up to 80 percent annual interest — far more interest than received by their church organizations or the dozens of rank-and-file Adventists who also made loans to the developer.

In his statement, Wilson conceded that some church financial officers may have accepted special favors from Davenport for channeling church monies into his vast real-estate empire, which collapsed with debts estimated at $68 million.

Wilson said the disciplinary measures were recommended by a 15-member president's review commission that spent five months evaluating a report by the church's special counsel, the na-

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